Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

3HW

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY

U. S. DEPARTMEN
OF AGRICULTUR
OFFICE OF INFORMATIO

(Release on receipt)

SUBJECT: "Measure of Quality"--Information from Production and Marketing Administration U.S. Department of Agriculture

-oOo-

Four-ten-thousandths of a cent! It's hard to imagine that small amount--isn't it? Well..that's what food processing companies estimate it costs them to pay for "continous inspection" in their plants. And more than 100 food packers think it's well worth the price...because they are able to say on the labels "Packed under continuous inspection of the U.S. Department of Agriculture."

Very likely you've noticed that phrase many times. Have you ever stopped to think about all it implies.

It means--first of all--that federal inspectors are on duty in the plant at all times while food is being processed.

Their inspection work begins when the trucks of fruits or vegetables are unloaded at the plant. The inspectors check on the condition and quality of the food when it arrives...on the sanitary condition of the plant...the machinery...the work rooms...the cleanliness of the workers. And the inspectors check on the food while it is being processed to see how carefully it is handled.

The job of continuous inspection doesn't stop with the sealing of the cans. The inspectors check on the temperature when the cans go into the cooker. Then later when the cans are stacked in the warehouse--the inspectors take out sample cans to test the finished product. About one can out of every thousand will give'em a sample check. And that's when the inspectors classify the finished product.

-more-

H-2.46

The inspectors have different tests for various types of food...but they always look for wholesomeness and quality. They judge these on the basis of the flavor,..the color...the size,..on the maturity of the product when it was canned... and on the acid and sugar content.

The result may go on the label as Grade A...B....or C. If there's a "U.S." in front of the grade....U.S.Grade A--for example--that tells you the food has been packed under continuous inspection of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Often plants have their own graders. Or the sampling may be done in one of the 40 USDA laboratories across the country. But the products with Grade A..B or C...must meet the quality requirements outlined in U.S. Department of Agriculture standards. Otherwise they are subject to misbranding under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Some packers prefer to use descriptive words instead of letters to tell the grades. In that case...the label on fruit may read Fancy...Choice or Standard. On vegetables...the label may read Fancy...Extra Standard or Standard.

Along with the grade...packers may give other descriptive information. The label may also tell you the weight...the number of servings...the variety..the stlye ...and there may be suggestions on ways to serve the food.

In any case...it pays to look at the label. And if you want a definite check on quality....look for the grade and the phrase-"packed under continuous inspection of the U.S. Department of Agriculture."

###

4-2-46

LIBRARY
CURRENT SERIAL RECORD
APR 8 1946
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE